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## JAPANESE AND CHINESE ART.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
MR. EDWARD GREY.



SINCE the Centennial Exhibition, there has been a steadily increasing interest in and demand for the exquisite and wonderful productions of the Japanese and Chinese, to meet which, stores exclusively devoted to the sale of such objects have been opened in all our principal cities. There are many such establishments in New York, some of them veritable galleries of Oriental art, among the foremost being

the one we are about to describe.

Outwardly the house, 20 East Seventeenth St., gives little indication of the extent and importance of the collection within its walls, a sign in the form of a *kakemono* and a few exquisitely colored porcelain vases in the windows, being the only evidence that it is used for business purposes; however, upon entering the doors we at once understand that the objects on exhibition are not only of very high quality but that the place is arranged in a unique and most artistic manner.

The reception-room is a harmony in bamboo, fret-work and brocade, and is full of cunningly devised shelves, and nooks and corners that most effectively display specimens of the various collections stored in the other apartments. Curtains of dainty Kyoto crêpe and of antique brocade are cleverly arranged to set off the lace-like panels, and the ingenious use of beautiful, reddish-brown, Japanese bamboo is particularly noticeable in the delightfully simple yet quaint chandelier, and in the graceful fringe above the portière.

Among the more important works in this room are a very fine antique celadon vase, two magnifi-



RECEPTION ROOMS.

cases lined with glowing red crêpe, two enormous porcelain figures of elephants, and many very beautiful, single color, Chinese porcelain vases from the collection of Captain Brinkley, R.A., of Yokohama, a well-known connoisseur, who is undoubtedly the greatest living authority upon Oriental ceramics.

The frieze of dark, indigo-dyed, cotton cloth, bears the symbol termed *tomoye*, used by the Japanese as a sign of good luck, and three gigantic Chinese characters that read:

HAKU RAN KUWAI,

*Exhibition of rare and valuable objects.*

Entering the next apartment, which is hung with yellow cloth and is just sufficiently lighted to reveal its more prominent contents, we see enthroned high upon our right, a life-size image of Buddha, "The Light of Asia," flanked by two enormous *Koro* (incense burners) of bronze, and on the opposite side of the room a pair of magnificent lamps and a finely proportioned Chinese vase of the same metal.

The pose of the Buddha is the same as that of the world-renowned Dai-Butsu of Kamakura, which is intended to symbolize *Nirvana*, perfect rest, or pure state of existence free from earthly feeling. The first image of Shaka was made, during his life, by a sculptor named Bishu Katsuma, whose skill was said to be so great that the wooden animals and birds that came from his hand were endowed with the power of motion, and who, from frequent attendance on the teachings of Buddha was familiar with every line of his countenance. The figure carved by him was five feet two inches high and was designed to represent the Teacher during the latter's absence in the To-ri-ten heaven, to which place Shaka ascended in order to teach the spirit of his mother the higher doctrines that had been revealed to him. Upon his return to earth (after an absence of three months) the image went forth to meet him, whereupon Shaka spoke to it, saying: "My Nirvana is at hand. Thou shalt take my place in converting mankind,"

LACQUER PANEL.  
EXTENSION ROOM.

TOMOYE.



BUDDHA, IN CENTER ROOM.

cent examples of modern Japanese bronze-work, the one containing the palm being by Yoshi-sane of Tokio, a number of grotesque gods, including

an excellent carving of the fat, contented, merry-looking Fuku-Roku-Jin, the God of Longevity, a pair of exquisite, blue, hawthorne jars, enshrined in





EXTENSION ROOM, FIRST FLOOR.

This miraculous *zo* is still in existence, being enthroned in the Sei-rio temple of the Jo-do sect of Buddhists at Saga, in the environs of Kioto, where "it silently and motionlessly awaits the re-appearance of its original."

Of course, few Japanese really believe it to be the figure made by Bishu Katsuma, still it is exceedingly interesting from a legendary view, being the model from which the features of all subsequent images of Shaka-muni have been copied, and consequently the material means by which millions of people have been converted to his doctrines.

The idol in the Sei-rio temple is pronounced by Japanese authorities to be of Chinese manufacture. It was brought from that country to Nara in the year 987.

While we were listening to the foregoing legend, incense was lighted in a small *Koro* placed upon the first step of the triple throne, and the curious bowl-shaped bronze bell resting on the cushion before it was gently struck, causing it to send forth a prolonged musical note that seemed to rise and fall until after the lapse of sixty seconds it sank into a sweet murmur which, combined with the thin blue clouds of fragrant incense that rose before the serene face of the Buddha and the dim light upon the gigantic bronzes, transported us to Japan and produced the strange feeling experienced when entering a Buddhist temple.

When we were able to once more realize that we were not in the Land of the Rising Sun, we learned that although the figure before us was of antique bronze, its triple throne and the *goko* (halo or glory) are of metallized wood, the original lotus-seat and *goko* having long ago been consigned to the melting pot and possibly converted into coin or cooking utensils.

The back of the idol is covered with engraved inscriptions, which record that it was cast during the period of Angen (A.D. 1175-1177). It is, therefore, over seven hundred years old. While inscriptions upon Japanese *zo* like those on the monuments in our cemeteries are often to be received *cum grano salis*, those upon this Buddha offer so many proofs of being genuine and the metal is so undoubtedly eroded by exposure and age that we may accept the records as true. They were made under the supervision of a priest named Shio-yo of the community of So-ren and give the names of the pious persons who contributed to the erection of the Buddha, the religious titles of their deceased parents and friends, for whose benefit the money was subscribed, the name of the sect and of the temple to which it was dedicated, the name and artistic title of the man

who cast it, and of his father who instructed him in his art and the date and place in which it was made and set up. All the sentences are Buddhistic and very difficult to render into English.

The bronzes flanking the image are probably the most magnificent *Koro* that have ever left Japan, being over eight feet high and of massive breadth. Their bases, beautifully proportioned pillars decorated with religious emblems, support three crouching, obese figures of demons, upon whose shoulders rest the globular vases in which the incense was burnt. These fine examples of casting and chasing bear, in relief, representations of the Jiu Dai Deshi—ten great disciples of Buddha—named Kasho, Anan, Sharihotsu, Mokuren, Anaritsu, Shubodai, Furuna, Kasenyan, Ubarimitsu, and the Buddha's son Ragora, whose heads are surrounded by the *goko* (glory) and some of whom carry a rosary like Mediaeval Christian saints.

The rims of the vessels are ornamented with figures in relief of the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, cock, hog, and fox, symbolic of the zodiacal signs, years, months and hours. The lids of the vases are decorated with conventional forms of clouds in relief, perforated so as to permit the smoke to escape, and are surmounted with rampant figures of the mythical Shungei "sky lion."

There is no mark or inscription upon these bronzes, but their *patina* is beautiful, and they were not "made for the foreign market."

The bronze lamps, on the opposite side of the room, are nearly seven feet high, exceedingly graceful in design, and, though not antique, may in contrast with pieces made since the opening of Japan to foreign trade, be termed old. Their slender forms, sharp casting, and fine outlines contrast as forcibly with the massive *Koro* on the opposite side of the room as does their blue-black color with the tawny yellow of the ancient Chinese vase placed on the pedestal between them.

The inscriptions cast upon the bases of the lamps show that they were made during the tenth year of the period of Bunsei (A.D. 1827) and the records that accompany them state:

"These *toro* were presented to the temple of Kompira, situated outside the Tiger gate in Yedo, (Tokio) in the Province of Musashi, by Owari Dai Naigon (Duke of Nagoya) who prays that his military success may continue forever."

The noble who, nearly sixty years ago, dedicated these exquisite works of art to the ancient Shinto god Kompira, little imagined his pious offerings would one day be transferred to the Land of the Western Barbarians "whose honored

son so gently raised the latch of the door of Dai Nihon," or that the priests of the temple of Kompira would glorify the face of the god with the flame of kerosene oil burnt in a Yankee lamp. The presence of his beautiful bronzes here, reminds us of the cry of the magician in the story of Aladdin.

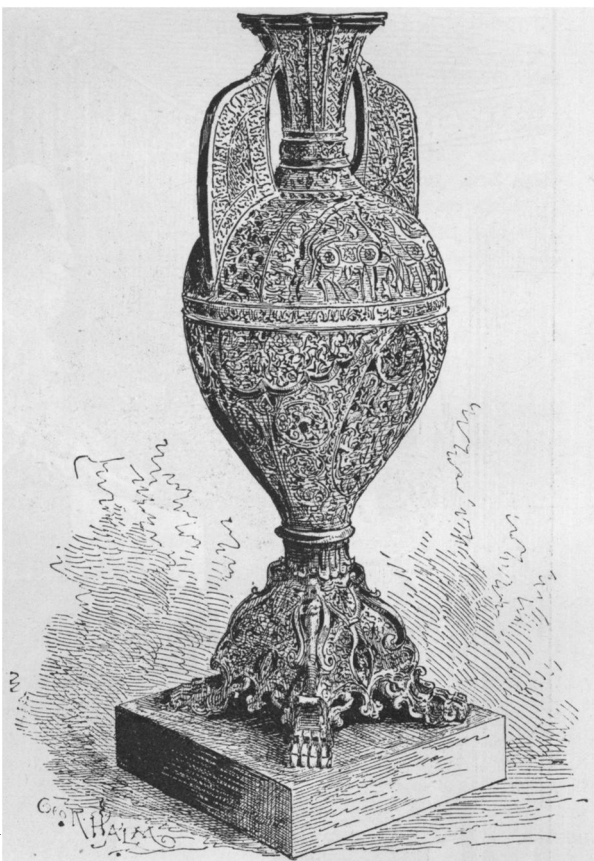
The chandelier in this room, which is of bronze simulating bamboo, is designed to either dimly light any portion of the apartment or to completely illuminate every nook and corner that a photograph can be obtained without solar aid.

We pass into the extension and find ourselves in an apartment, the walls, ceiling, carpet and shelving of which are in sympathetic tones of green and yellow, designed to rest the eyes and to heighten the beauty and add to the dignity of the bronze objects with which it is filled. Although the method employed is most simple, and the materials used are inexpensive, the result is thoroughly artistic and soothing to the vision, the effect being similar to what is experienced upon quitting strong sunlight on a sandy shore and entering the shade of a forest. This arrangement of colors is neither original nor accidental, but is the outcome of close observation of the methods employed by the ancient Chinese masters and their pupils the Japanese, who received the art by way of Korea.

In the center of this room, towers a bronze fountain, formed of three lotus-leaf shaped *midzu bachi*, the ensemble of which is the perfection of simplicity and grandeur. The inscriptions cast on the lower leaf show that it was presented to the temple of the second Tokugawa Shogun, on Mount Toyoi, Yedo, in the province of Musashi, by Sanada Shina no-Kami, governor of the Castle of Matsushiro, in Ogata, province of Shinano, as an ex-voto. It is dated "The Fifth Year of Em-po (A.D. 1677) and bears on one side the characters *Sei Ren Hachi*, "Green Lotus Bowl."

The second leaf is closely covered, inside and out, with cast and engraved inscriptions, and though not as antique as the lower is, like the upper, old and very fine.

Upon a stand between the windows is an ornate work in bronze over five feet high, a vase on which is a wonderfully executed coiled dragon supported by an admirably designed stand, one portion of which is a cluster of elephants' heads.



HISPANO-MOESQUE VASE (BRONZE).

Another important object is an exquisitely formed Hispano Moresque bronze, the upper part closely resembling the celebrated Alhambra Vase.

This room contains many other works of art in bronze, a large and beautiful collection of gold lacquer boxes, inro and cabinets, and many fine *Kakemono* (hanging pictures).

The small apartment adjoining it, illustrated by us, is an artistically arranged nook full of beautiful and quaint objects, the most rare and precious of all being "The Iron Dragon" of Miyochin Muneaki, twentieth descendant of the renowned armorer Miyochin, the greatest artist of the family. This wonderful *Okimono* (ornamental object) is specially mentioned in Satow and Hawes' Handbook of Japan, and is the finest, extant specimen of the great ironworker's skill. It was made for the Daimio of Yechizen, at the end of the period of Kwambun (about A.D. 1670), and was



JAPANESE MON.



(CREST).

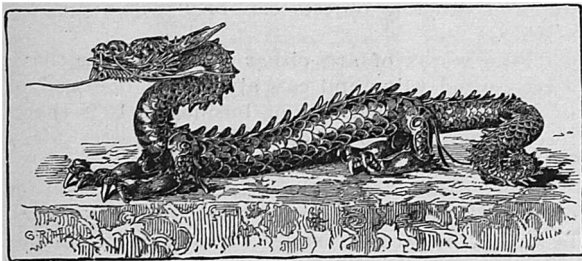


LACQUER PANEL.  
IN EXTENSION.



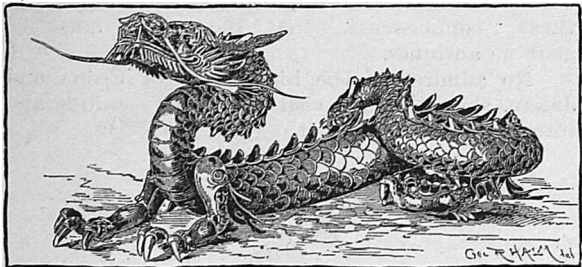
NOOK IN EXTENSION.

never out of the possession of his clan until A.D. 1878, when it was purchased, for a very large sum, by a well-known connoisseur.



IRON DRAGON (EXTENDED).

The dragon which is, when extended, twenty-six inches long, is composed of several hundred pieces, scales, and joints of hammered iron, so skillfully articulated that it can readily be moved both vertically and horizontally. Our illustrations depict it posed in two positions, showing its pliability, life-like force and grace. Muneaki was the Barye of Japan, the breadth of design and indifference to detail in this figure being very much like that which is seen in the works of the great French master. The dragon appears to be endowed with

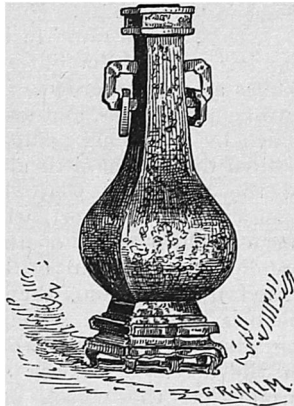


IRON DRAGON.

the power of motion, which is all the more remarkable when we remember that it is made from, artistically speaking, the most refractory of all metals—iron.

It rests upon a curiously carved stand of antique black lacquer (Tsui-Koku) and is provided with a box of fine brown lacquer, bearing the Tokugawa crest in gold.

Upon the right of the dragon is an exquisitely shaped iron vase, inlaid with gold, made in the Shunti period of the great Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1526-1536). On the bottom is the inscription *Ta Ming Shunti nien chi*. It was said to have formerly belonged to the celebrated virtuoso Kobori Masakadzu, and its authenticity is beyond question. Its picture and description appear in a MSS. entitled *Mei-hin roku* (catalogue of ancient works of art) which enjoys a wide reputation among Japanese dilettanti.



IRON VASE, INLAID WITH GOLD.

After examining a wonderful carving representing two deer, the fur of which is most realistically treated, we proceeded through a vestibule hung with *kakemono* and ascend to the second floor, in the front hall room of which are some wonderful, bowl-shaped bells, of cast and hammered bronze, insulated upon cushions, such as are used in the Buddhist service. The slightest touch upon the rim produces a wonderfully sweet, long-sustained note, that rises and falls with regular cadence. Five of these *rin*, the tones of which chord, a very rare combination, were specially imported for Mr. Henry Irving, and will soon be shipped to England. We also saw a very old bell the property of Miss Ellen Terry.

In this room are hung several charming *kakemono*, among them being an excellent picture by Yosai Kikuchi, painted when the artist was eighty years old. It represents the soldier-priest Musashi-bo-benkei, pacing the bridge of Santo awaiting the arrival of Minamoto no Ushiwaka, and is a true impressionist painting. Prof. Ernest Fenolosa, of the Imperial University of Tokio, who has spent many years in Japan and made an exhaustive study of its pictorial art and that of China, does not, in his scholarly and admirable criticism of the chapter on painting in *L'art Japonais*, by Gonse, rank Yosai as high as Hokusai, though he would probably consider this paint-

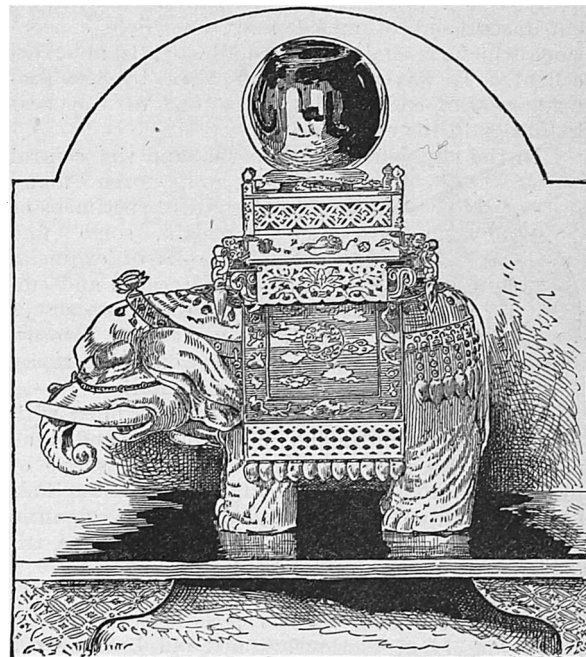
ing equal to any from the brush of the latter artist. He is preparing a history of the great painters of China and Japan which will be the



KAKEMONO (HANGING PICTURE).

standard work upon the subject, and will illustrate the large and valuable collection made by him under exceptionally favorable conditions during his long residence in the East.

The next apartment contains exquisite single color, Chinese porcelain vases, in shrine-like cases, many pieces of fine old Inari and Kaga, pipe cases, pouches and tsuba, the decorations of which were marvels of workmanship, and a collection of ivory *okimono* (ornaments) containing some of the most highly finished, beautiful pieces we have ever seen. One piece, figuring in our illustration, is of Ceylon ivory, free from break or blemish, carved from a tusk that must have belonged to a larger elephant than Jumbo. It rests upon a finely lacquered stand and supports a crystal ball fourteen and a half inches in circumference.



IVORY ELEPHANT AND CRYSTAL BALL.

Another important object is a rugged mass of *jinko* wood (sacred aloes), twenty-five inches high, carved to represent rock work, in an upper cavity of which, enthroned on a bed of leaves, rests a most exquisite ivory figure of Buddha, while ar-





CORNER OF JAPANESE ROOM.

ranged in the recesses beneath are the Ten Deshi (great disciples) and animals, worshiping Shaka, all of which are most beautifully carved and finished and are the work of Shima-mura Shunmei of Tokio.

The *kakemono* in this room are very fine, one representing Shaka surrounded by the various impersonations of Kuwannon. Each figure of the goddess is represented as playing upon a different instrument of music, and the whole conception, which is eminently Buddhistic, is most excellent. It was purchased in Nara by the proprietor, who considers it to be one of the best paintings in his collection.

In the cupboards between this and the central apartment are stored many rare and beautiful specimens of Hirado porcelain, some fine crystals, and rolls of exquisite Kioto crêpes, brocades and embroideries, also a number of magnificently mounted swords, the decorations of which repay the closest examination.

The next room is filled with quaint, old, colored and blue and white Imari and other ware, in the shape of plates, bowls and dishes sufficient to make half a dozen unique dinner services, also a gigantic green bowl of antique Chinese pottery, the iridescence of which is remarkable.

In the extension are many fine single color porcelain vases and curious pieces of pottery, a large number of gloriously-toned old brocade *obi* suitable for portière, and decorations and specimens of the white wood Kobe fret-work panels, imported by this house.

Returning through the rooms we were shown into a rear hall apartment, which has been converted into a veritable Japanese parlor. As we enter, we experience the sensation of walking upon a mattress, and find that the *tatami* (mats)

are two and a half inches thick. In Japan these are provided by the landlord, and as they serve to eat, live and sleep upon, young persons engaging a house find it half furnished.

The ceiling, *tokonoma* (recess, formerly devoted to the sword-rack, now used to exhibit some treasured object), *kami-dana* (god shelf), and *kodana* (cup-board), are of exquisitely designed fretwork made of white wood, untouched by oil, var-

nish, or filling, which contrasts admirably with the bronzed leather-like paper upon the walls and the heavy gold brocade portière and gracefully draped crêpe curtains. The ensemble is unique, light, cozy, and restful, and the apartment full of suggestions to the architect and decorator.

The cupboards contain many fine *chawan* (tea jars) and other beautiful pieces of glazed pottery that give one some idea of the intensely interesting, and historically complete, collection of such objects gathered by Professor Edward S. Morse at his house in Salem, Mass. The professor, who has for years made that branch of Oriental ceramics a special study, is the acknowledged successor of the lamented and accomplished Japanese connoisseur Ninagawa Noritane, whose writings and drawings he secured during his recent visit to Japan.

Among many rare and quaint objects in this room is a shrine enclosing a *shari-to* or pagoda, containing *shari* (gem-like substances found in the ashes of pious Buddhists, who have been cremated).

It was made in A. D. 1691, and is exceedingly interesting on account of its illustrating a peculiar superstition, connected with the ancient method of disposing of the dead.

"They placed the coffin of Buddha on a pyre of fragrant woods, and consumed it with pure fire. Amid the ashes of the sacred head were found countless *shari* (small round particles, of flinty substance). These were divided among the Deva Kings, who reverently carried them home and enshrined them in magnificent pagodas."

The *shari* in this shrine are not relics of Buddha but of two Buddhists, whose names are not recorded. The atoms are placed in two compartments, and are protected from profane touch by an oblong padlock. They were thus deposited during the fifth month of the fourth year of the period of Gen-roku. Professor Raphael Pumpelly, of Newport, who has resided in Japan, has examined some of these globules, and is of opinion that instead of being flinty atoms produced by cremation, they are water-worn, quartz pebbles, introduced among the ashes by the *bozu* (priests) for the purpose of comforting the family of the deceased, finding *shari* being considered a proof that the person cremated had become a Buddha.

Upon descending to the first floor we were shown a charming work in silver, gold, *Shakudo*

with creepers. It is fourteen inches high and in design and execution of detail, rivals the finest work of Cellini. A Japanese poem thus quaintly describes the subject:

"When the drum of war  
Is embraced by the vine,  
What?  
When from its apex  
The cock salutes the sun.  
What?  
Peace reigns in the empire."

This beautiful object is the work of Hagi-ya Kachi-hei, whose name is modestly engraved beneath the stand. The harmonious blending of metals, the grace, spirit and action of the cock, which is represented in the act of crowing, the admirable contempt for the intrinsic compared with the esthetic value of the materials used, shown in the overlaying of silver with copper, and the truly decorative manner in which he has employed the long tail feathers of the Imperial Huowo upon the ends of the drum, show the careful study and artistic nature of the workman, and that, even in these degenerate days, the Japanese, when well paid and permitted to exercise the knowledge transmitted by their ancestors and teachers, can produce works of the highest excellence.

The foregoing is a most imperfect description of some pieces in this important collection. The entire selection, arrangement, and decoration of which are the work of Mr. Edward Greey, who has long been known through his delightful and instructive books upon Japan, and whose knowledge of Oriental art is at the service of and most valuable to those who desire to possess rare and beautiful works from the far East.

Some collectors attach great importance to the grime and dust with which the objects in their possession are loaded, believing that discoloration, erosion and cracks are evidence of antiquity. They also imagine if a piece is old it must be fine and valuable.

Age leaves certain marks upon metal, porcelain, pottery, ivory, and all substances used in the ornamental arts, and these indications are thoroughly known to experts. Antiquity will never, in an artistic sense, make a badly designed and executed work, either important or interesting, and really fine works are generally in a good state of preservation.

The great productions of the masters were as beautiful when they left their hands as they are to-day. True, time has mellowed their colors and imparted a charm of its own, but, if they can be taken as standards now, they were models of excellence centuries ago; and this particularly applies to the art of the East.

There is also another error, which is, that fine and valuable objects can be "picked up" for a trifle.

Fine works of art, either old or modern, have a recognized value and can always be disposed of in the regular channels of business. It is therefore "impossible to purchase an old master for a mere song."

The demand on the part of foreigners for cheap antiques, has induced some clever workers, in Japan, to produce copies of their more famous old masters, or to stain, pickle and give an appearance of age to their own admirable productions. These objects are sold by the makers to the Japanese curio-men, who furnish certificates and histories, of any age, to suit the articles. Foreigners, who purchase from these men, ship the forgeries, with documents attached, all over the world, and ignorant dealers sell the "antiquities" without knowing or caring about the truth of the stories that accompany them. A large number of these cleverly manipulated works are purchased by persons who "visit the East as travellers" and who import them as "private collections," and sell the same "as a great favor" to those who think, because they were brought over from Japan by these "connoisseurs," that the pieces must be genuine antiques.

No admirer of the higher art of China and Japan, should fail to visit Mr. Greey's unique and interesting establishment.



KORO (INCENSE BURNER)

and *Shibuichi*, representing "Peace," symbolized by a cock perched upon a war drum overgrown



DAI KOKU (GOD OF RICHES)